THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The scale of pay of the posts of Inspectors of Income Tax and Central Excise was revised from Rs. 5500-9000 to Rs. 6500-10500 by the Department of Expenditure. With this upgradation of the scale of pay, the posts came under the classification of Group 'B' Non-Gazetted. As it was-only an upgradation of the scale of pay and did not involve any change in the nature of duties assigned to the post, it remains as Group 'B' Non-Gazetted.

Tax evasion in marble and opium trade

3206. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the approximate quantum of tax evasion in marble and opium trade;

(b) whether there are official auctions in opium trade; and

(c) what are the effective steps to avert tax evasion in these areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) In so far opium is concerned, opium cultivation in India is carried out by licensed farmers, only in the tracts notified by the Government. As no private party is involved in opium trade the question of tax evasion does not arise.

In so far as marble trade is concerned, tax evasion of central excise duty of Rs. 1781.92 lakh has been detected in marble trade. The quantum of customs duty evasion in marble trade is negligible. However, in the year 2004-2005 the estimated customs duty evasion was about Rs. 5.19 crore, being Rs. 5.04 crore in a single case.

In so far as Direct Taxes are concerned, since no business/trade wise data in respect of tax evasion is maintained by Central Board of Direct Taxes, it is not possible to quantify the tax evasion in marble and opium trade.

(b) In view of (a) above, does not arise.

(c) Various statutory measures as laid down by the Income Tax Act, 1961 including scrutiny, survey, search & seizure etc. are taken for averting

tax evasion in these areas. Further, Government is taking all necessary measures under the Central Excise Act, 1944 and the rules made thereunder. The marble consignments are being examined on first check basis so that the actual quantity can be measured and evaluated with regard to classification and exemption notification to plug any possible evasion of duty. Stiff fines and penalties are also imposed on mis-declaration to discourage evasion.

Deactivation of PAN cards

3207. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that over a million Permanent Account Numbers of the estimated 43 million issued may soon be deactivated on account of the revelation that individuals have received more than one number;

(b) whether Government officials have identified the dpulicate PAN cards issued; and

(c) if so, the action proposed thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) The Income-tax Department has decided to de-activate the duplicate PANs held by persons.

(b) The Department has identified the likely duplicate PANs through an automated process.

(c) The likely duplicate PANs have been communicated to the jurisdictional Assessing Officers who have been asked to ascertain from the persons holding such PAN. Subsequently, on confirmation, the duplicate PANs will be de-activated and data linked to the main PAN.

Circulation of black money

3208. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any report from any circle, about the amount of black money on circulation in Indian markets at present;

(b) if so, the amount of black money at present in markets;